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A Clean Plate 也談淨食

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Clean eating is the phrase on everybody’s lips, but what does it actually mean? Here, chefs consider that question and address where the trend is going – and where it really should end up. 不少人把淨食掛在嘴邊，然而何謂淨食呢？廚師們是怎麼看這個問題的？他們又認為這個飲食趨勢應朝哪個方向發展？ **By Mamie Chen**

A clean plate 也談淨食



American celebrity chef Nathan Lyon holds up a pint of gleaming red cherries. The firm-yet-tender and juicy stone fruit might tempt any healthy-living social-media influencer to declare them Instagram-worthy with a trending #cleaneating hashtag. Seasonally fresh, organically grown and locally sourced from a small-scale farmer, they certainly appear to be a definitive example of “clean eating” – or would be if there actually were a widely accepted and understood meaning for the term that’s risen in mainstream popularity over the past few years. And therein lies the problem.

“I personally don’t use the phrase ‘clean eating’, because there’s no single definition,” says Lyon. “Everyone defines it as they see fit in order to push whatever agenda they have.” The term initially rose out of a healthy-eating movement that emphasised fresh, unprocessed and mostly plant-based food, and introduced kale, chia seeds, quinoa and goji berries as nutritious superfoods to a global audience. But over time, it’s been co-opted by subgroups to mean anything from pesticide-free, GMO-free, meat-free, dairy-free, sugar-free, or gluten-free to all of the above and more.

For Lyon, an Emmy-nominated culinary television host and best-selling author of *Great Food Starts Fresh* who frequently shares his expertise across media that don’t allow for an immediate exchange of clarifying questions and answers, the nebulous, hard-to-pin-down meanings and interpretations of “clean eating” just won’t cut it.

“When people ask how to eat as ‘cleanly’ as possible, what they’re really asking is how to eat as ‘healthily’ as possible,” he says. “My answer is always to eat as unprocessed as possible and, when cooking, to start with as close to the raw, whole ingredients as possible.”

So the pint of fresh cherries does in fact serve as an example of Lyon’s interpretation of clean eating. “Show me the list of ingredients for this,” he challenges his audience. There are no sodium, sugars, trans fats, and unpronounceable additives and preservatives, giving him more control over properly seasoning and flavouring his dishes.

He also rests comfortable in the knowledge that the produce, when locally sourced from trusted farmers following organic farming practices, has been grown without harmful pesticides and chemicals and has also been seasonally picked at its absolute peak in flavour.

Opposite page: Teff Shiitake Gnocchi at Grassroots Pantry

This page, from top: Chef Nathan Lyon’s Cauliflower Steaks; Lyon at work

對頁：豆腐居的苔蕈香菇丸子

本頁上至下：Nathan Lyon的椰菜花扒；Lyon本人



美國名廚Nathan Lyon手持一杯紅得發亮、果肉結實爽口、飽滿多汁的車厘子，這樣的照片肯定會吸引追求健康生活的社交媒體紅人在自己的Instagram上轉載，然後趕潮流地打上#cleaneating（淨食）的主題標籤。這些由本地小型農場生產的新鮮有機時令水果，似乎理所當然又或者應該是淨食的絕佳例子——如果大眾對這個近年在主流社會日趨流行的詞語有一致認同的理解。然而實情卻非如此理想。

Lyon表示：「我個人不會用『淨食』一詞，因為其定義莫衷一是，大家都為了各自的目的而給予它一個定義。」淨食一詞源自一場強調要進食新鮮、無加工及以蔬果為主食物的健康飲食運動，還大力推介營養豐富的羽衣甘藍、奇亞籽、藜麥及枸杞子等超級食物。不過隨著時間演變，淨食一詞開始被其他小群體引用，代表任何無農藥、無基因改造、無肉類、無乳製品、無糖或無麩質等等的飲食習慣。

Lyon是著名電視飲食節目主持人，曾獲提名艾美獎，也是暢銷書《Great Food Starts Fresh》的作者。他經常在不同媒體分享其專業知識，而這些媒體根本沒時間讓人當場作出討論，釐清問題與答案。因此對他而言，意義含糊不清、難以下定論的「淨食」一詞，根本無法明確表達什麼。



Lyon isn’t alone in questioning the hype around the “clean eating” trend, but is supporting a return to a more natural and traditional approach towards cooking and eating.

When Danilo Cortellini, the head chef at the Italian Embassy in London, was first approached to create a menu using healthy, whole foods for the clean-eating café, Fitaly, he was specifically asked to find ways to incorporate alternative ingredients like barley, spelt flour and chickpeas. “These aren’t ‘alternative’ ingredients to me,” he replied. “I grew up with these types of rustic cereals and legumes.”

Happily, Cortellini has found himself returning to his roots in simple home cooking that celebrates the inherent beauty of seasonal, fresh produce and the natural, whole foods from his home region of Abruzzo. For some dishes, he features traditional ingredients in ways that are more appealing to the UK market. Where chickpeas are often used to lend heartiness to stews and pastas, Cortellini blends them with spinach and shapes them into patties for protein- and nutrient-rich vegan burgers. In other cases, he lightens classic Abruzzi recipes through a judicious use of cheese and herbs, many of which are flavoursome enough to allow for a reduction in fat and salt without compromise on the taste of the overall dish.

In fact, Cortellini’s overarching philosophy is that clean eating doesn’t have to be about renunciations. Lean meats and seafood do make appearances on the Fitaly menu beside vegetarian and vegan options.

他說：「當人們問如何才能吃得盡量『純淨』時，其實是在問如何才能吃得『健康』，我的答案永遠是盡量進食未經加工的食品，烹調時則盡量採用新鮮及天然無加工食材。」

那麼，根據Lyon對淨食的理解，那杯新鮮的車厘子確實是代表淨食的好例子。他向電視觀眾提出挑戰：「請說出杯子裡的食物有哪些成分。」它沒有鈉、糖分、反式脂肪，亦沒有名字拗口的添加劑及防腐劑，如此一來調味時也就更能隨心所欲。

他亦表示，知道所用農產來自當地可靠的有機耕作農場，知道蔬果種植時沒有使用有害的殺蟲劑和化學物，並且都是在其最佳狀態時採摘等，用起來會更安心。

質疑現時關於淨食的各種熱潮，但支持回歸自然及傳統烹調和飲食習慣的廚師，不只Lyon一個。

當倫敦的意大利大使館主廚Danilo Cortellini首次獲邀以健康及天然食材為淨食概念咖啡店Fitaly設計餐單時，店家要求他採用大麥、斯佩爾特小麥粉及鷹嘴豆等另類食材。他當時回答說：「對我來說這些都不是什麼『另類』食材，我就是吃這些質樸的穀物和豆類長大的。」

Cortellini樂得回到自己的根源，重拾簡單的家常料理，以家鄉阿布魯佐大區的新鮮時令農產和天然無添加食材烹調佳餚。在某些菜式上，他會採用傳統的食材，但在烹調上更符合英國市場的口味。例如原本鷹嘴豆一般會加入燉菜和麵條裡增加口感和味道，Cortellini則把鷹嘴豆和菠菜攪碎拌勻做成肉餅狀，變成蛋白質及營養豐富的素漢堡。另一方面，他又審慎地使用芝士和香草來改良味道濃郁的經典阿布魯佐菜式，使其脂肪和鹽分大減之餘卻無損整體的味道。



Looking at the nutritional value of a dish – that’s the real future of healthy eating

注重每道菜的營養價值才是健康飲食真正的未來

– Peggy Chan



Opposite page, from left: Danilo Cortellini’s Rice-stuffed Roast Tomatoes; chef Cortellini of the Italian Embassy in London

This page: Dragon Maki Roll at Grassroots Pantry

對頁左至右：Danilo Cortellini的烤番茄釀飯；倫敦的意大利大使館總廚Cortellini

本頁：豆苗居的Dragon Maki Roll

And the plant-based dishes can be every bit as tasty and exciting as their meat-based counterparts.

“Yes, sometimes you need to be clever and put in a bit more effort to make a beautiful dish out of vegetarian ingredients, but it doesn’t always have to be,” he says. “I always start by sourcing local, fresh ingredients as much as possible. Then I dig deep to find a way to celebrate their beauty.”

Likewise in Hong Kong, chef patron Peggy Chan opened Grassroots Pantry in 2011 in part to dispel the popular misconception that plant-based foods are a boring and bland product of a new health and wellness fad. “Vegetarian food is innate to nearly every culture,” she says. Her menu draws on a range of cooking techniques and flavours from around the world, from roasting, sautéing and smoking to brining, fermenting, and culturing. She also makes use of a broad variety of ingredients, from a diverse assortment of mushrooms from Yunnan to the protein-rich Ethiopian grain teff.



“Looking at the nutritional value of a dish – that’s the real future of healthy eating,” says Chan. “How can you consume enough plant protein, iron and other nutrients in the least amount of calories possible?” In developing recipes, she carefully considers every ingredient, ready to substitute more nutrient-rich alternatives wherever possible.

Chan has begun reaching out to F&B colleagues both in Hong Kong and abroad to share her philosophy and invite them to participate in a Collective’s Table dinner, where she challenges them to create vegan food without conventional staples such as eggs, dairy, butter, refined flour and processed sugar. In April, Chef Garima Arora of Bangkok’s Restaurant Gaa stunned Chan with a vegan mayonnaise made by blending dry yeast with sunflower-seed oil and then whisking it with aquafaba. The result was a silky smooth spread that was full of umami from the yeast.

“I asked her if she’d done anything like it before – she said no. She just came up with something new, and that’s exactly what we wanted from the Collective’s Table,” says Chan. Past Collective’s Table chefs have returned to their restaurants and added more vegan options to their menus. Michelle Garnaut introduced a successful monthly vegan brunch at her Shanghai bar, Glam. And Neil Tomes of Beef & Liberty stopped eating meat himself about a year and a

Chen: A Clean Plate ????

事實上，Cortellini的飲食哲學兼收並蓄，認為淨食不必等於放棄這個那個。以Fitaly的餐單為例，除了有素食和全素菜式外，也有肉類及海鮮佳餚，而以蔬菜為主的菜式不比肉類遜色。他說：「沒錯，有時候素食菜式確實需要花更多心思才能做得出色，但這並非定律。我通常會盡量蒐集最多的本地新鮮食材，然後深入研究如何帶出食材的美味。」

在香港，廚師Peggy Chan於2011年開設豆苗居，目的就是要糾正一般人認為素食只是健康飲食潮流下平淡乏味的產品這個錯誤觀念。她說：「幾乎每個飲食文化本來都包含素食。」她設計的餐單糅合世界各地的烹飪技巧和味道，由烘烤、嫩炒和煙燻，以至鹽漬、發酵和培植等；採用的食材則由雲南菌菇到埃塞俄比亞蛋白質豐富的苔藓等，各式各樣。

她說：「注重每道菜的營養價值是健康飲食真正的未來。如何在汲取最少卡路里的情況下，獲得足夠的植物蛋白質、鐵質及其他營養？」在設計食譜時，她會細心考慮每款食材，盡可能採用更富營養價值的材料。

Chan已開始向香港及海外的飲食同業分享她的理念，並邀請他們參與由她發起的Collective’s Table晚餐計劃。參加計劃的廚師必須炮製一道素菜，但不能採用傳統的食材如雞蛋、乳製品、牛油、精製麵粉及經過加工的糖等。4月，曼谷餐廳Gaa大廚Garima Arora的素蛋黃醬就讓Chan拍案叫絕：Arora先混和乾酵母和葵花籽油，然後加入素蛋白霜攪打，做出質感幼滑、充滿酵母鮮味的素蛋黃醬。

Chan說：「我問她以前有沒有做過同類型的醬料，她說沒有，那是她的全新創作，而這正正就是Collective’s Table的目的。」參加過Collective’s Table晚餐的廚師回到自己的餐廳後，會為顧客提供更多的素食選擇。例如，任職上海酒吧Glam的Michelle Garnaut每月均會推出一款大受歡迎的素食早午餐：Beef & Liberty的Neil Tomes自從與Chan緊密合作後，已約有一年半沒吃肉了。他表示：「如果沒有這樣的互相砥礪，我們永遠無法突破自己的創作界限。」

Bobsy Gaia也利用自己在香港的餐廳作為平台提升淨食意識，他創辦Mana! Fast Slow Food來證明快餐也可以做到純淨、環保、健康和價錢相宜，而且不會留下有害的生態足跡。

他說：「在Mana!，淨食固然是必須的，但現時我們的焦點是可持續發展，引起公眾關注飲食對氣候的影響。」

當他了解到漢堡包的真正成本還包括碳足跡等延伸代價時，他立刻停止吃肉；當知道大海裡魚的數量日漸減少時，他立即停吃海鮮。他說：「我突然發覺自己一邊植樹以保護環境，另一邊卻在享用肉類破壞環境，但兩者並不能互相抵銷。」

Gaia目前正在提倡「飲食改變，氣候不變」的信息。不過，雖然他可以一下子就改為茹素，但他亦理解這樣突然的轉變很難叫人堅持下去。不過，大家可以逢週一不吃肉吧？這是實際可行的。

他說：「我支持逐步的改變，因為只要循序漸進地改變，就不會走回頭路。不過，時間十分重要，不能花十年時間去改變。」 🌱

half after working closely with Chan. “If we don’t challenge each other like this, we’ll never break past our creative limits.”

Bobsy Gaia similarly uses his Hong Kong restaurant as a platform to raise awareness. He founded Mana! Fast Slow Food to prove that fast food could be clean, green, healthy and inexpensive without leaving behind a dirty eco-footprint.

“For us at Mana!, it’s a given that clean eating is a must,” he says. “But now we need to turn the focus on sustainability and push the conversation to the impact that our diet has on the climate.”

He immediately stopped eating meat after learning about the real cost of a hamburger with externalities like carbon footprint factored in, and he stopped eating seafood after learning about fish-stock depletion in the oceans. “I realised that I was planting trees to protect the environment with one hand, but I was eating meats with the other hand,” he says. “The two could not equate.”

Gaia has now been championing the message “Diet Change. Not Climate Change.” Despite his own successful cold-turkey conversion to a plant-based diet, he understands that such a radical shift would be difficult for most to sustain. But could they give up meat on Mondays? It’s realistic.

“I’m supportive of a gradual move. Because once you’ve moved sustainably, you aren’t going to go back,” he says. “But time is of the essence. Let’s not take a decade to do this.” 🌱

“We need to focus on sustainability and push the conversation to the impact that our diet has on the climate

我們的焦點是可持續發展，引起公眾關注
飲食對氣候的影響 🌱

– Bobsy Gaia



Opposite page:
Chef Peggy Chan of
Grassroots Pantry

This page, from top:
Bobsy Gaia, founder of
Mana! Fast Slow Food;
Mana!’s Falafel Flat

對頁：豆苗居主廚
Peggy Chan

本頁上至下：Mana! Fast
Slow Food餐廳的創辦人
Bobsy Gaia；Mana!的炸鷹
嘴豆餅卷Falafel Flat